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Synopsis of Important Articles.

Fulfilled Prophecy—A Standing Miracle.*—The church has two defenses for revealed truth—miracles and prophecy. The latter has been almost lost sight of. Five elements must exist in any real prophecy: (1) Foretelling with clearness; (2) Something beyond human shrewdness; (3) Space between prophecy and fulfillment; (4) Fulfillment must be without collusion or conspiracy; (5) A real fulfillment must have taken place. Four lines of fulfilled prophecy show that prediction was not an arrow shot at random, but the revelation of an almighty purpose and an omniscient mind; (1) Prophecy bearing upon *other nations of the world*; (a) Gen. 16: 12, a history of the Arab race; (b) Daniel, wherever he belongs, predicted a history yet to be; (c) Nahum foretold the fall of Nineveh, etc. (2) Prophecy concerning *the Jews*. (3) Prophecy concerning *a Messiah*, who should be of the line of David, spring out of Bethlehem, lighten the country about Galilee, come before the sceptre should depart from Judah, etc., etc. It is admitted that the life of the Christ conforms to the prophecies; but may not this have been the outcome of a plan of Jesus himself? No; for (a) Jesus was not the product of his age; (b) no one could have constructed a Messiah to meet the demands of the Old Testament; (c) the character of Jesus is evidence of the contrary. (4) *The prophecies of Jesus himself*.

Prophecy should be studied, because (1) it is one of the two great supports and witnesses; (2) fulfilled prophecies are present day miracles; (3) prophecy is a stronger witness than a miracle; (4) it will strengthen the church; (5) it will show that prophecy still unfulfilled will yet be fulfilled. Reasons, many and good ones, are given why prophecy has been largely ignored.

The writer asserts the distinction between prophecy and prediction, yet does not seem to maintain it in some parts of the paper. He accepts some interpretations long since exploded, e. g., "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come." He confounds radical criticism, like that of Strauss, Renan, with conservative criticism, which would build up instead of tearing down. On the other hand, his style is exceedingly vivid, and forceful; his theory of prophecy, reasonable and strong; his arguments and conclusions, clear and invincible.

The Design of the Apocalypse.†—There are two possible theories, the historical and the descriptive. The descriptive theory is that which sees in the book only the symbolic representation of great ideas and principles; proclamations of eternal truth in general terms. Against this it is urged (1) the mere expression of general principles of the divine government hardly affords a sufficient motive for so complicated and difficult a book. These ideas are plainer than the book written to enforce them. (2) The theory is not self-consistent for it admits that there may be some predictive or historical element in the book. And if any of this element is to be admitted, and it is difficult to see how it can be shut out, then this scheme of interpretation fails to satisfy the demand which the book itself makes. (3) This book ranks with Daniel and the two books stand or fall together. Both are what are called apocalyptic and are more than mere prophecy. What may be asserted of prophecy cannot be in all respects true of them. While we have no right to class these two

* By Rev. O. P. Eaches in *The Baptist Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1889, pp. 468-482.

† By Rev. Prin. David Brown, D. D., in *The Expositor*, Dec. 1889, pp. 446-456.

books with that heap of writings which are usually denominated "apocalyptic," yet it must be granted that such a method of interpretation as the "descriptive" is out of keeping with them as having characteristics similar, though in a higher degree, to those other writings. Reference will be made later to the purely historical theory which sees in the book only closely related events which it needed no predictive power to discover.

This is a bold and cogent negative to the views of the Apocalypse which are maintained by Prof. Milligan of Aberdeen in his various writings on this Scripture. While that theory delivers us from fanatic and outrageous misinterpretations of the mysterious symbolism, it seems to fail adequately to account for the peculiar structure and style which characterize the Apocalypse.

Book Notices.

The Epistle to the Romans.

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. By Rev. D. B. Ford. An American Commentary on the New Testament. Edited by Alvah Hovey, D.D. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society.

In the preface of this volume the information is given that the manuscript notes of the Rev. A. N. Arnold upon the Epistle were handed over to the author for revision and amplification. Without working them over, Mr. Ford has inserted them bodily into his book and has added his annotations in brackets. The result cannot be pronounced especially satisfactory. The two interpreters do not always agree and the spectacle is presented of a divergence of view which is somewhat exasperating to the reader. The additions of the present editor do not seem as valuable as they might have been. They are often long drawn out enlargements of what has been compactly and succinctly stated in Dr. Arnold's comments. Commentators of all ranks and conditions are cited as authority and abundant excerpts on either side of a disputed question are given. There are certain advantages in this method, but they are overbalanced by the obvious disadvantage that the commentary loses any distinctive character and becomes an uncritical thesaurus of differing opinions. The notes of Dr. Arnold show evidences of skill and experience as a teacher. They are brief, scholarly, informing, definite. If presented by themselves they would have been, if not a positive addition to the literature of the subject, a helpful guide to intelligent students. If the present editor had been permitted to write a commentary entirely his own or had used the material of the former writer only as subsidiary, he might have produced a better work. His contributions, however, do not seem to be characterized by the scientific method and exegetical tact of his predecessor. The theological position of the book is Calvinistic and Augustinian. The realistic view of Adam's relation to the race is maintained. The commentator shows his geographical habitat by his frequent references to the so-called "New Theology" and his note on the "decensus." Certain notes of the general editor, Dr. Hovey, scattered through the work, are helpful and convincing. Taking it all together the commentary will make some additions to the useful literature on this masterly epistle.